

## Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 NEAE-00 INRE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00  
USIE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15 IO-13 ACDA-07 AID-05 OMB-01 TRSE-00  
AGRE-00 EB-07 /095 W  
-----171819Z 068490 /42

O P 171637Z JAN 77  
FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT  
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2744  
INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 199  
USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER  
USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM  
CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG  
CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER  
CIA WASHDC  
COMSIXTHFLT  
COMPHIBRON SIX  
COM THREE FOUR MAU  
CTF SIX ZERO  
CTF SIX ONE  
CTF SIX TWO  
CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO  
FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA  
FOSIF ROTA SPAIN  
DIA WASHDC  
CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER  
USDOCOSOUTH NAPLES IT

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 BEIRUT 0174

E.O. 11652: GDS  
TAGS: MILI, PINS, PINT, LE  
SUBJECT: LEBANESE SITUATION JANUARY 15-17

REF: BEIRUT 0159 (DTG 141442Z JAN 77)

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1. SUMMARY: THE CABINET AT A JAN 15 MEETING ISSUED  
A NUMBER OF NEW DECREES, MOST OF WHICH FOCUSED ON  
VARIOUS ASPECTS OF LEBANON'S POST-WAR RECONSTRUCTION.  
FUAD BOUTROS WHO ADDRESSED THE LEBANESE IN A TELEVISED  
INTERVIEW JAN 15, SAID THAT LEBANON HAD AN ARAB ROLE TO  
PLAY IN INTERNATIONAL POLITICS AND THAT HE WAS STUDYING  
LEBANON'S PARTICIPATION AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE.

THE ASF HAS APPARENTLY NOT YET BEGUN SEARCHING SERIOUSLY FOR UNAUTHORIZED HEAVY WEAPONS. THE LAST OF THE PALESTINIAN REGULAR FORCES ARE DUE TO DEPART BY JAN 18. PHALANGE REPRESENTATIVES FROM SOUTH LEBANON WHO MET JAN 16 CALLED FOR ASF ENTRY AND THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A LEBANESE ARMY "SOUTHERN BRIGADE" IN SOUTHERN LEBANON. BECHIR GEMAYEL ADMITS PRIVATELY THAT HIS OWN THINKING ON THE FUTURE OF LEBANON IS CLOSER TO THAT OF CAMILLE CHAMOUN THAN TO THAT OF HIS FATHER PIERRE GEMAYEL. THE MARONITE LEAGUE NOW SUPPORTS FEDERATION. GENERAL HANNA SAID HAS REPORTEDLY PRESENTED A PLAN TO PRESIDENT SARKIS FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY ON A FEDERAL BASIS. LEFTIST PARTIES ARE REPORTED BEGINNING TO GO UNDERGROUND. ALL LEBANESE BANKS RESUMED OPERATIONS JAN 17. US TECHNICAL TEAM DEPARTED JAN 16. END SUMMARY.

2. CABINET ISSUES NEW DECREES. THE LEBANESE CABINET, WHICH MET UNDER PRESIDENT SARKIS JAN 15, ISSUED A NUMBER OF DECREES WHICH:

A. APPROVED PURCHASE OF THE REMAINDER OF THE 1975 TOBACCO CROP AS WELL AS THE ENTIRE YIELD FOR 1976.

B. APPOINTED FIVE MEMBERS, REPRESENTING THE STATE AND NATIONAL SOCIAL SECURITY FUND, TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE RESETTLEMENT BANK.

C. FURNISHED CERTAIN AID TO GOL HOSPITALS.

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D. TRANSFERRED 44.5 MILLION LEBANESE POUNDS HELD BY VARIOUS NATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS TO THE HIGHER COMMITTEE FOR AID.

E. DIRECTED THE MINISTRY OF HOUSING AND COOPERATIVES TO PREPARE STUDIES ON FARMERS' NEEDS AND INDUSTRIAL FARMING.

F. AUTHORIZED A LOAN FOR THE OVERHAUL OF WATER NETWORKS DAMAGED DURING THE WAR.

G. DETERMINED THAT LEBANON WOULD ATTEND THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE ARAB ORGANIZATION FOR ADMINISTRATIVE SCIENCES IN CAIRO.

AFTER THE MEETING, PRIME MINISTER AL-HOSS SAID THAT HE BRIEFED THE CABINET ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO IRAQ AND THE GULF STATES, AND THAT THE CABINET ALSO DISCUSSED THE PRELIMINARY RESULTS OF THE U.S. AND FRENCH ASSISTANCE TEAMS. HE DENIED THAT THE CABINET HAD ISSUED A DECREE ON

THE REORGANIZATION OF THE ARMY.

3. FUAD BOUTROS ON TELEVISION. IN A LEBANESE TELEVISION INTERVIEW ON JAN 15, FONMIN BOUTROS CALLED THE CURRENT SITUATION IN LEBANON A TRUCE AND SAID THAT PEACE WOULD ONLY BE ACHIEVED WHEN THERE WAS POLITICAL UNDERSTANDING. HE SAID LEBANON HAS AN ARAB ROLE TO PLAY IN THE INTERNATIONAL ARENA, AND "WE WILL SOON APPEAR ON THE INTERNATIONAL STAGE." HE SAID HE IS STUDYING THE QUESTION OF LEBANON'S ATTENDANCE AT THE GENEVA CONFERENCE. HE DESCRIBED THE SITUATION IN THE SOUTH AS "A LEBANESE, ARAB, AND MORE THAN ARAB QUESTION. WE ARE NOT NEGLECTING THIS SUBJECT AND CONTACTS ARE GOING ON, BUT SILENT DIPLOMACY IS BETTER..." BOUTROS FELT THE QUESTION OF A PALESTINIAN STATE SHOULD BE LEFT TO THE PALESTINIANS THEMSELVES.

4. ARMS COLLECTION AND PALESTINIAN WITHDRAWAL. AN NAHAR  
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REPORTED JAN 15 FROM LEBANESE FRONT SOURCES THAT THE ASF HAS BEGUN SEARCHING FOR UNAUTHORIZED ARMS, AND THAT THE PALESTINIANS HAVE ALLOWED ENTRY INTO THEIR CAMPS FOR THIS PURPOSE. HOWEVER, AL MOHARRIR JAN 16 SAYS THE ASF IS NOT PLANNING TO USE VIOLENCE AT THIS STAGE, BUT WILL TRY TO PERSUADE THE VARIOUS MILITIAS TO GIVE UP FURTHER HEAVY WEAPONS THAT THEY ARE KNOWN TO CONTROL. AL MOHARRIR SAYS THE GOL WILL NOT COLLECT LIGHT AND INTERMEDIATE ARMS UNTIL THE HEAVY WEAPONS COLLECTION IS FINISHED; THE PROCEDURE FOR SMALLER ARMS WILL BE THE SAME AS THAT FOR HEAVY ARMS, WITH ALL SIDES FIRST PREPARING LISTS OF THEIR WEAPONS. MEANWHILE, AL BAYRAQ CLAIMED JAN 17 THAT THE REMAINDER OF THE PALESTINIAN REGULAR ARMY WOULD COMPLETE ITS WITHDRAWAL FROM LEBANON WITHIN 24 HOURS.

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USIE-00 PM-04 H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01  
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FM AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 2745

INFO SIT-REP COLLECTIVE PRIORITY 200

USCINCEUR VAIHINGEN GER

USNMR SHAPE BELGIUM

CINCUSNAVEUR, LONDON ENG

CINCUSAFE RAMSTEIN AB GER

CIA WASHDC

COMSIXTHFLT

COMPHIBRON SIX

COM THREE FOUR MAU

CTF SIX ZERO

CTF SIX ONE

CTF SIX TWO

CTG SIX ZERO PT TWO

FICEURLANT NORFOLK VA

FOSIF ROTA SPAIN

DIA WASHDC

CINCUSAREUR HEIDELBERG GER

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5. PHALANGE CONFERENCE ON THE SOUTH. PHALANGE REPRESENTATIVES FROM SOUTH LEBANON MET JAN 16 AND, ACCORDING TO AL AMAL, RECOMMENDED: A) THAT THE ASF ENTER THE SOUTH; B) A "SOUTHERN BRIGADE" OF THE LEBANESE ARMY SHOULD BE ESTABLISHED; C) GUERRILLA OPERATIONS IN SOUTH LEBANON SHOULD END; AND D) THE CAIRO AGREEMENT SHOULD BE IMPLEMENTED.

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MENTED IN THE SOUTH, PARTICULARLY THE PROVISIONS PERTAINING TO COLLECTION OF WEAPONS " AND DISARMING ALL ELEMENTS." THE PHALANGE HAS ALSO REQUESTED HOUSE SPEAKER KAMAL AL-ASSAD TO DISCUSS THE SOUTHERN SITUATION AT THE ARAB PARLIAMENTARY CONFERENCE IN JORDAN.

6. BECHIR GEMAYEL ON THE FAR RIGHT. IN A DISCUSSION WITH AN EMBASSY EMPLOYEE JAN 15, BECHIR GEMAYEL SAID THAT HE WAS CLOSER IN HIS THINKING ON THE FUTURE OF LEBANON TO CAMILLE CHAMOUN THAN TO HIS FATHER PIERRE. HE SAID THE LEBANESE FRONT IS UNDERTAKING CONTACTS NOW WITH SHIITE, DRUZE, ARMENIAN, AND GREEK ORTHODOX GROUPS. HE ALSO SAID THAT THE LEBANESE FRONT WOULD LIKE AUB TO MAINTAIN A BRANCH IN THE EASTERN SECTOR.

7. RIGHTIST FEDERATION PLANS. FOLLOWING MOST OF THE

CHAMOUNISTS, AS WELL AS THE BECHIR GEMAYEL WING OF THE PHALANGE PARTY, THE MARONITE LEAGUE IS COMING OUT IN SUPPORT OF FEDERATION, ACCORDING TO SHAKIR SULEIMAN, THE LEAGUE PRESIDENT. SULEIMAN, HOWEVER, SAYS EXPLICITLY THAT FOREIGN AFFAIRS AND DEFENSE SHOULD REMAIN UNDER CENTRAL CONTROL. SULEIMAN SAYS THAT PRESIDENT SARKIS IS TAKING A NON-COMMITTAL ATTITUDE ON THIS AND OTHER POLITICAL QUESTIONS UNTIL SECURITY IS ESTABLISHED. HE SAYS THE LEAGUE IS HAVING DIFFICULTY WORKING TOGETHER WITH THE KASLIK MONKS WHO ARE "TOO FANATICAL" ABOUT CHRISTIAN-MOSLEM RELATIONS, AND WILL ESTABLISH ITS OWN RESEARCH GROUP.

8. ARMY REORGANIZATION PLAN. ACCORDING TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE MARONITE LEAGUE, GENERAL HANNA SAID HAD SUBMITTED A PLAN TO PRESIDENT SARKIS FOR THE REORGANIZATION OF THE LEBANESE ARMY WHICH WOULD DIVIDE LEBANON INTO FOUR MILITARY DISTRICTS CORRESPONDING ROUGHLY TO PLANS NOW BEING DISCUSSED AMONG RIGHTISTS FOR FOUR CANTONS--GREATER BEIRUT, MOUNT LEBANON, NORTH LEBANON, AND SOUTH LEBANON.

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9. LEFTISTS GOING UNDERGROUND? THE LEFTIST NEWSPAPER AL LIWA REPORTS FROM "RELIABLE SOURCES" THAT A NUMBER OF LEBANESE LEFTIST PARTIES ARE PLANNING TO DISSOLVE THEIR PUBLIC ORGANIZATIONS AND INDULGE IN MORE "PARTISAN ACTION," INCLUDING THE ARAB SOCIALIST UNION AND PARTS OF THE POPULAR SOCIALIST PARTY AND THE MURABITUN.

10. BANKS BACK IN BUSINESS. AS A RESULT OF A DECISION TAKEN BY THE BANKERS ASSOCIATION ALL LEBANESE BANKS WILL RESUME NORMAL OPERATIONS JAN 17. PRIMIN AL-HOSS DECLARED THAT THE PRIVATE SECTOR MUST RELY ON THE BANKS FOR RECONSTRUCTION AND THAT PRIVATE INSTITUTIONS SHOULD OBTAIN LONG-TERM LOANS INSTEAD OF COMPENSATION.

11. US AID TEAM DEPART. THE FACT-FINDING US AID TEAM DEPARTED FOR WASHINGTON JAN 16 (SEPTTEL).  
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## Message Attributes

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**TAGS:** MILI, PINS, PINT, LE  
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